

## Appendix 5

### Lewisham Future Programme 2015/16 Revenue Budget Savings Report

Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee Referral Response - End of the discretionary freedom pass scheme – O1

#### 1. Background

1.1 Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee has requested further options in relation to saving proposal O1 – end of the discretionary freedom pass scheme.

#### 2. Referral

2.1 *The committee recommended that further work be carried out to assess alternative options for the scheme. The committee asked that, before a decision is taken to end the discretionary scheme, information be provided which sets out the financial and administrative implications of ceasing to issue new passes, whilst retaining the scheme for existing users. The committee also recommended that options for changing the eligibility criteria for the scheme be further examined.*

#### 3. Response

**3.1 Additional option – close the discretionary freedom pass scheme to new applicants – saving £20,000 in year 1 plus a further £20,000 in year 2.**

3.1.1 Based on 2012 and 2013 there is an average of 100 discretionary freedom passes holders per year that are no longer entitled because their circumstances change, they move or they reach the national scheme age for an elderly persons freedom pass.

3.1.2 If the scheme was closed for new applications but retained for existing discretionary freedom pass holders there would be an approximate saving of £20,000 in year 1 with an additional £20,000 in year 2. There would be further increases in the savings achievable beyond year 2 but the amount would be dependent on the numbers leaving the scheme at that time.

**3.2 Additional option – review the eligibility criteria to reduce the number of persons entitled to a discretionary freedom pass.**

3.2.1 Whilst it would be possible to review the eligibility criteria to reduce the number of persons entitled it is not a simple piece of work. The following steps would be required:

- Work with Community Services and SLAM to look at caseload and the costing of different scenarios and saving predictions.
- A change in the policy with the relevant consultation.
- A review of each case by Concessionary Awards team to implement new eligibility criteria.

- Most cases will require referral to an Occupational Therapist for an assessment.
- A review of each case by Community Services and SLAM as care package may need adapting.

3.2.2 The cost of the above work is estimated to be £100,000. Without carrying out the work it is difficult to estimate the possible saving.

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